

WHAT IS MEDIATION

MEDIATION is a process in which a neutral Civil Rights Specialist aids the Complainants and Respondents in their settlement discussions. The Specialist attempts to have the parties negotiate a resolution of the dispute.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE?

To reach a **SETTLEMENT** of complaints based on:

- ◆ Age
- ◆ Race
- ◆ Color
- ◆ Creed
- ◆ Sex
- ◆ Sexual Orientation
- ◆ Gender Identity
- ◆ National Origin
- ◆ Pregnancy
- ◆ Mental Disability
- ◆ Physical Disability
- ◆ Religion
- ◆ Retaliation
- ◆ Familial Status
- ◆ Marital Status

HOW DOES IT WORK?

- ◆ After a complaint has been screened for further investigation, it is forwarded to the mediation team;
- ◆ The complainant and respondent are sent information explaining mediation;
- ◆ The specialist contacts the parties within a few days to further explain mediation and answer any questions;
- ◆ If both parties agree, a meeting is scheduled within a few weeks;
- ◆ A dialogue between the parties is established through the specialist;
- ◆ The specialist assists the parties in reaching an agreement to resolve the charge;
- ◆ If the complaint is resolved, the mediator drafts the settlement agreement that day for both parties' signature.

WHO IS THE MEDIATOR?

A ***neutral*** and ***impartial*** Civil Rights Specialist employed by the Iowa Civil Rights Commission as part of the Mediation Team.

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE COMPLAINANT AND RESPONDENT

- ◆ Approach mediation in good faith and with an open mind;
- ◆ Willing to listen to the other side;
- ◆ Participate in the mediation;
- ◆ Try to settle the dispute with the assistance of the mediator.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MEDIATION AND INVESTIGATION

MEDIATION
The mediator does not have authority to decide who prevails but acts as a facilitator.

INVESTIGATION

Its purpose is to determine if there is enough evidence to prove discrimination.

WHAT ARE THE ADVANTAGES OF MEDIATION?

- ◆ Mediation is **free!** Because the Iowa Civil Rights Commission uses trained internal specialists, there is no cost to either party.
- ◆ Mediation is **fast!** A mediation conference can be scheduled soon after the complaint has been screened in.
- ◆ Mediation gives both sides the chance to be heard and give their side of the story. It also allows each side the opportunity to work toward a resolution.
- ◆ Each side can settle the complaint at a mediation conference that will close the case at the Iowa Civil Rights Commission.
- ◆ It's a **Win/Win** solution for everyone – there are no losers!
- ◆ Mediation is **confidential!** Information shared at the conference will not be shared with anyone else.

WHAT HAPPENS IF AN AGREEMENT IS NOT REACHED?

The complaint is put in line for full investigation.

HOW CAN I LEARN MORE?

For further information contact:

IOWA CIVIL RIGHTS COMMISSION
Grimes State Office Building
400 E. 14th Street
DES MOINES, IOWA 50319

Mediation Coordinator
Sommay Soulinthavong

Phone: 515-281-4446

FAX: 515-242-5840

E-mail:

Sommay.Soulinthavong@iowa.gov

MONDAY – FRIDAY
Office Hours 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM
Excludes Holidays

**Interpreters are available for Spanish,
Thai, Taidam and Lao.**

MEDIATION

Free

Fast

Confidential

Everyone WINS!

Beth Townsend, Executive Director